



Jackie Jansen

IBM Previews DB2 Web Query

Those of you who have been following this column know that I have been urging you (for a long time) to look at more modern, end-user-friendly products to replace Query/400. I am very pleased to be able to tell you that on April 10, 2007 IBM announced plans to deliver a Web-based query and report writing product that will replace Query/400.

I have been working extensively with this product for the last few months and I am very excited to have been able to be part of the team bringing it to you. The official name for the new product will be IBM DB2 Web Query for System i, more affectionately known as DB2 Web Query.

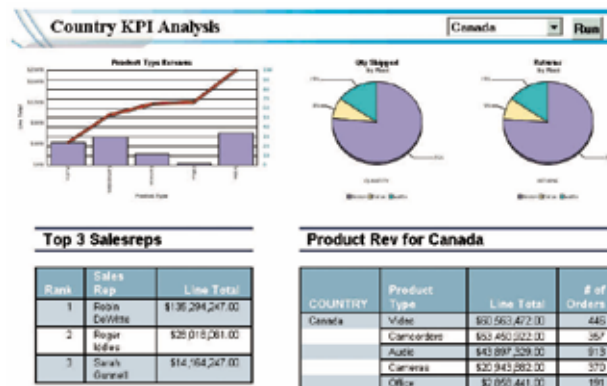
DB2 Web Query is comprised of multiple components. There are basic report writing and graphing tools as well as a WYSIWYG tool for your power users to define compound reports. Optionally there is also a developer's tool that allows you to link multiple reports on one screen. Users can choose HTML or PDF or MS/Excel or any one of many additional output formats including DB2 tables.

DB2 Web Query reports can be OLAP-enabled, allowing users to drill down on fields such as country to the province level and then to the county or city level. Any DB2 table that contains a basic hierarchy within its columns can be setup for OLAP. DB2 Web Query nicely supports disconnected users. On-the-go users, such as mobile sales reps, can open a report within an HTML page on their local PC and analyze their customer's buying behaviour prior to visiting the customer.

The entire product is System i centric. There are no requirements for any additional hardware. The end users are supported completely through a web-based browser

interface with no need for local software or add-ons. Developers can choose to use Web-based tools, or optionally, more sophisticated Windows-based development tools.

DB2 Web Query has been optimized for the System i and its heritage. It understands and supports tables with multiple members, tables residing in user asps and System i library lists.




This tool will integrate extremely well into environments where the users have taken advantage of the capabilities within DB2 on the System i. For example any long names, column headings, or other metadata that you might have defined in DB2 is automatically carried forward into the reporting tool. If you have taken advantage of facilities such as foreign keys in DB2 this greatly simplifies users querying data across multiple tables. In these cases the users will never have to worry about joining tables. DB2 Web Query understands foreign keys and will simply present the user with a composite view of the table encompassing columns from all immediately related tables.

If your tables aren't all on a single System i, you can use DB2 Web Query to combine and join tables from multiple DB2 for System i databases. IBM's business partner in this endeavour, Information Builders, can provide add-ons that will allow you to query about 300 different databases, including many you probably have never

heard of, directly from DB2 Web Query. This list of database adaptors includes many of the major System i ERP vendors.

In addition to new development, DB2 Web Query is also designed to handle your existing Query/400 queries. You can choose to run your existing queries basically "as is" or, with a few keystrokes, you can take your green screen output and make it much more attractive. For example, you can highlight exceptions in your report and then output the results to a PDF file or directly to MS/Excel for the user. IBM plans to start a limited beta on this product in early May. There will be a DB2 Web Query redbook with tutorials to assist users in getting started with this product.

TUG members attending the May 30th Meeting of Members will have a chance to see this product live in action at 5:00 pm. Luckily this demonstration will precede **Randall Munson's** presentation since Randall normally manages to convince everyone that they can't believe anything that they see. For those of you who haven't had the pleasure of watching Randall combine his magician's skills with technology this will be a real treat for you.

I look forward to seeing everyone on May 30th and showing you IBM DB2 Web Query for System i. 

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